

Immediate transition from high school to college

Since most college students enroll in college immediately after completing high school, the percentage of high school completers enrolled in college the October after finishing high school is an indicator of the total proportion of that year's high school completers who will ever enroll in college. The percentage enrolling not only reflects the accessibility of higher education to high school completers, but also shows the value completers place on attending college as compared to working, entering the military, starting families, or pursuing other interests.

- Between 1986 and 1996, the percentage of high school completers going directly to college increased from 54 to 65 percent (see supplemental table 7-1).
- Between 1986 and 1995, high school completers from high income families were more likely than their counterparts from low income families to go directly to college after completing high school (see supplemental table 7-1).
- Between 1990 and 1996, the higher the education level of a student's parents, the more likely the student was to enroll in college the year after completing high school (see supplemental table 7-2).
- The percentage of black high school completers going directly to college increased substantially between 1973 and 1995.

Percentage of high school completers ages 16–24 who were enrolled in college the October after completing high school, by type of institution, family income, and race/ethnicity: October 1972–96

				Family income ¹				Race/ethnicity ²				
				Low		Middle	High	White	Black		Hispanic	
				3-year		Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual	3-year		3-year
October	Total	Type of institution	2-year	4-year	Annual average					Annual average	Annual average	Annual average
1972	49.2	—	—	26.1	(³)	45.2	63.8	49.7	44.6	(³)	45.0	(³)
1973	46.6	14.9	31.7	20.3	(³)	40.9	64.4	47.8	32.5	41.4	54.1	48.7
1975	50.7	18.2	32.6	31.2	(³)	46.2	64.5	51.1	41.7	44.4	58.0	52.5
1977	50.6	17.5	33.1	27.7	32.8	44.2	66.3	50.8	49.5	46.8	50.8	48.5
1979	49.3	17.5	31.8	30.5	31.5	43.2	63.2	49.9	46.7	45.3	45.0	46.4
1981	53.9	20.5	33.5	33.6	33.0	49.2	67.6	54.9	42.7	40.4	52.1	49.2
1983	52.7	19.2	33.5	34.6	34.0	45.2	70.3	55.0	38.2	37.9	54.2	47.3
1985	57.7	19.6	38.1	40.2	36.2	50.6	74.6	60.1	42.2	39.6	51.0	46.5
1987	56.8	18.9	37.9	36.9	37.8	50.0	73.8	58.6	52.2	44.5	33.5	44.9
1989	59.6	20.7	38.9	48.1	45.8	55.4	70.7	60.7	53.4	48.2	55.1	51.6
1990	60.1	20.1	40.0	46.7	44.7	54.4	76.6	63.0	46.8	48.9	42.7	51.7
1991	62.5	24.9	37.7	39.5	42.3	58.4	78.2	65.4	46.4	47.2	57.2	51.6
1992	61.9	23.0	38.9	40.9	43.6	57.0	79.0	64.3	48.2	50.1	55.0	58.1
1993	61.5	22.4	39.1	50.4	44.1	56.9	79.3	62.9	55.6	51.5	62.2	55.4
1994	61.9	21.0	40.9	41.0	41.9	57.8	78.4	64.5	50.8	52.5	49.1	55.0
1995	61.9	21.5	40.4	34.2	41.3	56.1	83.4	64.3	51.2	52.6	53.7	51.2
1996	65.0	23.1	41.9	48.6	(³)	62.7	78.0	67.4	56.0	(³)	50.8	(³)

— Not available. Data for type of institution were not collected until 1973.

¹ Low income is the bottom 20 percent of all family incomes; high income is the top 20 percent of all family incomes; and middle income is the 60 percent in-between. See the supplemental note to this indicator for further discussion.

² Included in the total but not shown separately are high school completers from other racial/ethnic groups.

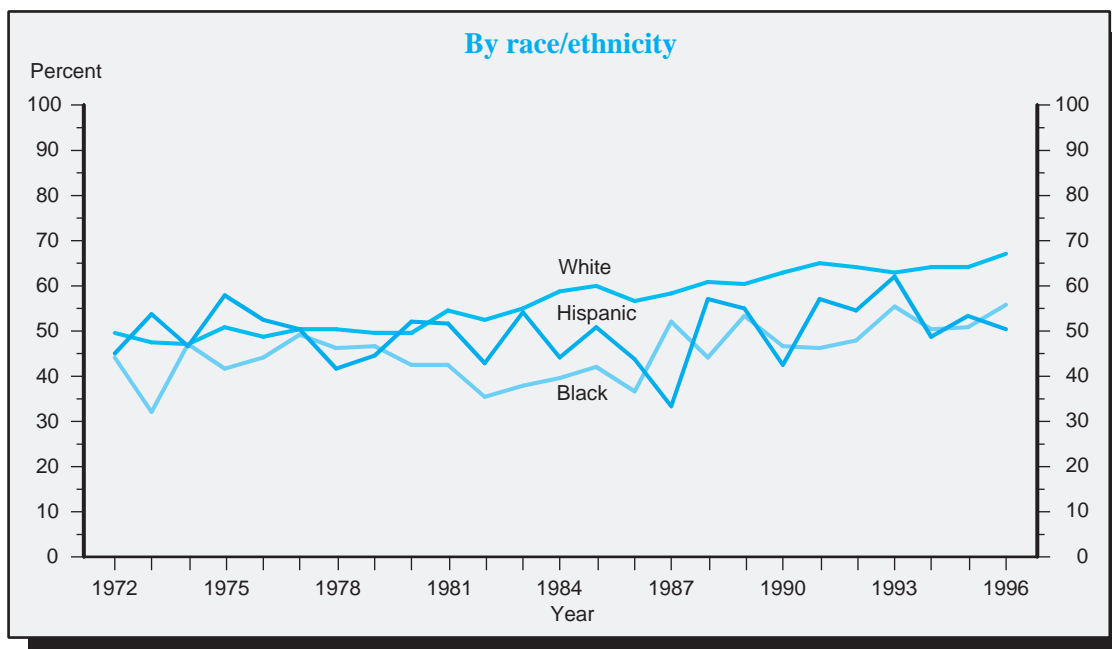
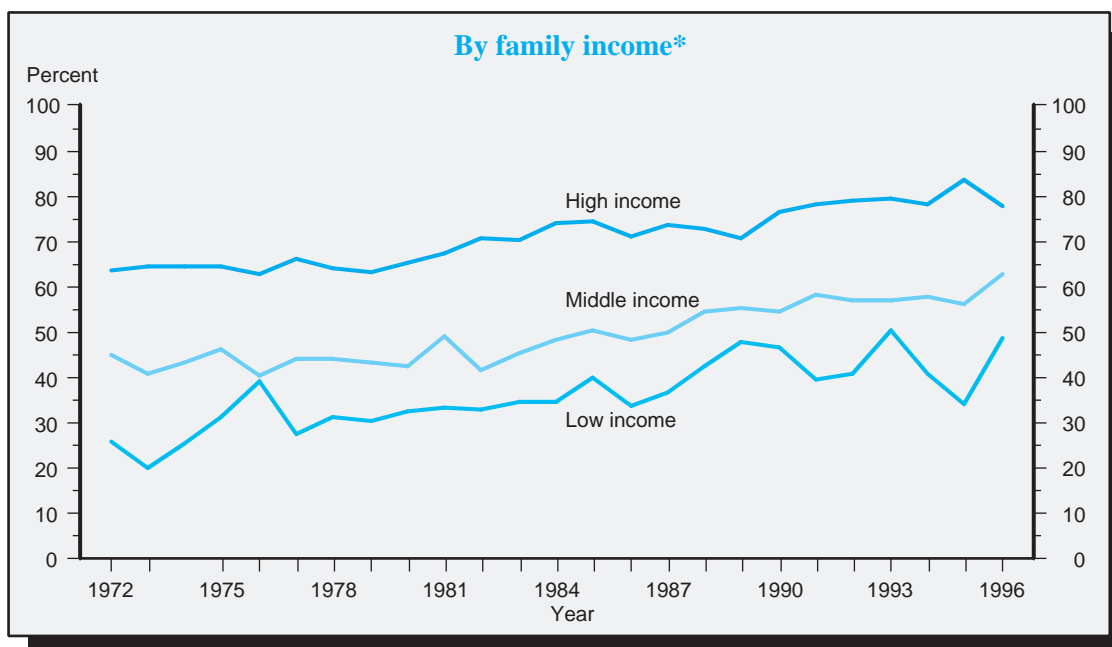
³ Due to small sample sizes for the low income, black, and Hispanic categories, 3-year averages were also calculated for each category. For

example, the 3-year average for blacks in 1973 is the average percentage of black high school completers ages 16–24 who were enrolled in college the October after completing high school in 1972, 1973, and 1974. Thus, 3-year averages cannot be calculated for 1972 and 1996, and for groups of 3 years in which some data are not available (e.g., 1973–75 for the low income category).

NOTE: Details may not add to totals due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, October Current Population Surveys.

Percentage of high school completers ages 16–24 who were enrolled in college the October after completing high school: October 1972–96



* Low income is the bottom 20 percent of all family incomes; high income is the top 20 percent of all family incomes; and middle income is the 60 percent in-between. See the supplemental note to this indicator for further discussion. Data on family income were not available in 1974.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, October Current Population Surveys.

Table 7-1 Percentage of high school completers ages 16–24 who were enrolled in college the October after completing high school, by type of institution, family income, and race/ethnicity: October 1972–96

October	Total	Type of institution		Family income ¹			Race/ethnicity ²					
				Low	3-year	Middle	High	White	Black	Hispanic	3-year	3-year
		2-year	4-year	Annual	average	Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual average	Annual	average	average
1972	49.2	—	—	26.1	(³)	45.2	63.8	49.7	44.6	(³)	45.0	(³)
1973	46.6	14.9	31.7	20.3	(³)	40.9	64.4	47.8	32.5	41.4	54.1	48.7
1974	47.6	15.2	32.4	—	—	—	—	47.2	47.2	40.5	46.9	53.0
1975	50.7	18.2	32.6	31.2	(³)	46.2	64.5	51.1	41.7	44.4	58.0	52.5
1976	48.8	15.6	33.3	39.1	32.7	40.5	63.0	48.8	44.4	45.2	52.7	53.8
1977	50.6	17.5	33.1	27.7	32.8	44.2	66.3	50.8	49.5	46.8	50.8	48.5
1978	50.1	17.0	33.1	31.4	29.9	44.3	64.0	50.5	46.4	47.5	42.0	45.9
1979	49.3	17.5	31.8	30.5	31.5	43.2	63.2	49.9	46.7	45.3	45.0	46.4
1980	49.3	19.4	29.9	32.5	32.2	42.5	65.2	49.8	42.7	44.0	52.3	49.8
1981	53.9	20.5	33.5	33.6	33.0	49.2	67.6	54.9	42.7	40.4	52.1	49.2
1982	50.6	19.1	31.5	32.8	33.7	41.7	70.9	52.7	35.8	38.9	43.2	49.8
1983	52.7	19.2	33.5	34.6	34.0	45.2	70.3	55.0	38.2	37.9	54.2	47.3
1984	55.2	19.4	35.8	34.5	36.4	48.4	74.0	59.0	39.8	40.0	44.3	49.9
1985	57.7	19.6	38.1	40.2	36.2	50.6	74.6	60.1	42.2	39.6	51.0	46.5
1986	53.8	19.3	34.5	33.9	37.0	48.5	71.0	56.8	36.9	43.8	44.0	42.9
1987	56.8	18.9	37.9	36.9	37.8	50.0	73.8	58.6	52.2	44.5	33.5	44.9
1988	58.9	21.9	37.1	42.5	42.5	54.7	72.8	61.1	44.4	50.0	57.1	48.6
1989	59.6	20.7	38.9	48.1	45.8	55.4	70.7	60.7	53.4	48.2	55.1	51.6
1990	60.1	20.1	40.0	46.7	44.7	54.4	76.6	63.0	46.8	48.9	42.7	51.7
1991	62.5	24.9	37.7	39.5	42.3	58.4	78.2	65.4	46.4	47.2	57.2	51.6
1992	61.9	23.0	38.9	40.9	43.6	57.0	79.0	64.3	48.2	50.1	55.0	58.1
1993	61.5	22.4	39.1	50.4	44.1	56.9	79.3	62.9	55.6	51.5	62.2	55.4
1994	61.9	21.0	40.9	41.0	41.9	57.8	78.4	64.5	50.8	52.5	49.1	55.0
1995	61.9	21.5	40.4	34.2	41.3	56.1	83.4	64.3	51.2	52.6	53.7	51.2
1996	65.0	23.1	41.9	48.6	(³)	62.7	78.0	67.4	56.0	(³)	50.8	(³)

— Not available. Data for type of institution were not collected until 1973, and data on family income were not available in 1974.

¹ Low income is the bottom 20 percent of all family incomes; high income is the top 20 percent of all family incomes; and middle income is the 60 percent in-between. See the supplemental note to this indicator for further discussion.

² Included in the total but not shown separately are high school completers from other racial/ethnic groups.

³ Due to small sample sizes for the low income, black, and Hispanic categories, 3-year averages also were calculated for each category. For example, the 3-year average for blacks in 1973 is the average percentage

of black high school completers ages 16–24 who were enrolled in college the October after completing high school in 1972, 1973, and 1974. Thus, 3-year averages cannot be calculated for 1972 and 1996, and for groups of 3 years in which some data are not available (e.g., 1973–75 for the low income category).

NOTE: Details may not add to totals due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, October Current Population Surveys.

Table 7-2 **Percentage of high school completers ages 16–24 who were enrolled in college the October after completing high school, by parents' highest education level: October 1990–96**

Parents' highest education level ¹	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Total	60.1	62.5	61.9	61.5	61.9	61.9	65.0
Less than high school completer	33.9	42.6	33.1	47.1	43.0	27.3	45.0
High school completer	49.0	51.0	55.5	52.3	49.9	47.0	56.1
Some college	65.6	67.5	67.5	62.7	65.0	70.2	66.6
Bachelor's degree or higher	83.1	87.2	81.3	87.9	82.5	87.7	85.2
Not available ²	47.7	42.1	38.0	42.0	43.1	30.8	45.6

¹Parents' highest education level is defined as either 1) the highest educational attainment of the two parents who reside with the student or, if only one parent is in the residence, the highest educational attainment of that parent; or 2) when neither parent resides with the student, the highest educational attainment of the head of the household and his or her spouse.

² Parents' highest education level is not available for 1) those who do not live with their parents and who are classified as the head of the household

(not including those who live in college dormitories); and 2) those whose parents' educational attainment was not reported. In 1996, approximately 11 percent of high school graduates ages 16–24 were in this category.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, October Current Population Surveys.

Note to Indicator 7: Family income

The Current Population Survey (CPS) includes a family income variable that is used in many indicators in this publication as a measure of a student's economic standing. The three family income categories used in this publication are low, middle, and high income. Low income is the bottom 20 percent of all family incomes; high income is the top 20 percent of all family incomes; and middle income is the 60 percent in-between. The table that follows shows the real dollar amounts (rounded to the nearest \$100) of the breakpoints between low and middle income and between middle and high income. For example, in 1996, low income was defined as the range between \$0–12,200; middle income was defined as the range between \$12,201–58,100; and high income was defined as \$58,100 and over. Therefore, the breakpoints between low and middle income and between middle and high income are \$12,200 and \$58,100, respectively.

Dollar value (in current dollars) at the breakpoints between low and middle income and between middle and high income categories of family income: October 1970–96

October	Breakpoints between:	
	Low and middle income	Middle and high income
1970	\$3,300	\$11,900
1971	—	—
1972	3,500	13,600
1973	3,900	14,800
1974	—	—
1975	4,300	17,000
1976	4,600	18,300
1977	4,900	20,000
1978	5,300	21,600
1979	5,800	23,700
1980	6,000	25,300
1981	6,500	27,100
1982	7,100	31,300
1983	7,300	32,400
1984	7,400	34,200
1985	7,800	36,400
1986	8,400	38,200
1987	8,800	39,700
1988	9,300	42,100
1989	9,500	44,000
1990	9,600	46,300
1991	10,500	48,400
1992	10,700	49,700
1993	10,800	50,700
1994	11,800	55,300
1995	11,700	56,200
1996	12,200	58,100

— Not available.

NOTE: Amounts are rounded to nearest \$100.

Table S7 **Standard errors for the text table in *Indicator 7***

October	Total	Type of institution		Family income			Race/ethnicity					
				Low	Middle	High	White	Black	Hispanic			
		2-year	4-year	3-year		Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual	3-year	3-year	3-year
				Annual	average							
1972	1.3	—	—	3.4	(*)	1.7	2.2	1.4	4.6	(*)	9.7	(*)
1973	1.3	0.9	1.2	3.2	(*)	1.7	2.1	1.4	4.3	2.6	9.0	5.3
1975	1.3	1.0	1.2	3.6	(*)	1.7	2.1	1.4	4.7	2.7	8.4	4.8
1977	1.3	1.0	1.2	3.5	2.1	1.8	2.0	1.4	4.7	2.7	8.0	4.7
1979	1.3	1.0	1.2	3.8	2.1	1.7	2.0	1.4	4.7	2.6	7.9	4.8
1981	1.3	1.1	1.2	3.9	2.1	1.7	2.1	1.4	4.4	2.5	8.2	4.7
1983	1.4	1.1	1.3	4.0	2.2	1.9	2.2	1.6	4.3	2.5	9.0	4.7
1985	1.4	1.2	1.4	4.1	2.2	2.0	2.2	1.6	4.8	2.6	9.8	5.2
1987	1.5	1.2	1.4	3.9	2.2	2.1	2.2	1.7	4.8	2.7	8.3	4.8
1989	1.7	1.4	1.7	4.6	2.7	2.3	2.7	1.9	5.3	3.0	10.5	6.3
1990	1.6	1.3	1.6	4.8	2.6	2.1	2.5	1.8	5.1	3.0	10.8	5.6
1991	1.6	1.4	1.6	4.5	2.6	2.3	2.4	1.8	5.3	2.9	9.6	5.5
1992	1.6	1.4	1.6	4.4	2.6	2.2	2.4	1.8	4.9	3.0	8.5	5.1
1993	1.6	1.4	1.6	4.6	2.6	2.1	2.5	1.9	5.3	3.0	8.2	4.8
1994	1.6	1.3	1.6	4.4	2.5	2.1	2.4	1.8	5.3	3.0	9.5	4.9
1995	1.5	1.3	1.5	3.9	2.3	2.2	2.0	1.8	5.0	2.9	7.5	4.8
1996	1.5	1.4	1.6	(*)	(*)	2.1	2.5	1.8	4.8	(*)	8.8	(*)

— Not available.

* Not applicable.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, October Current Population Surveys.